

than half of the 50 States would shut down at the end of 2019. So you would get a few more years, and then hard-working Americans would be thrown off into the street in 31 States, including Washington, D.C. Women, seniors, children, in particular pregnant women, would see their health care thrown to the wind, extinguished, burned up.

The bill also proposes a major overhaul of Medicaid, a Federal State program covering more than 70 million low-income and disabled Americans. I believe that the proposal is to block grant Medicaid dollars under the pretense of letting States be creative.

I want Americans and my colleagues to understand what creativity means. Creativity simply means that they will do everything they can to shorten and cheapen the health benefits that you will get. And it will be made through deals, how little money can we spend, whether we can use the Medicaid block grant dollars for some other things, a wish list that we may want in the State that we come from, the 31 States, plus Washington, D.C.

Instead of the current open-ended Federal entitlement, States would get capped payment block grants based on the number of Medicaid enrollees. Block grants, basically. And when it runs out, you are in a whole world of trouble. Or, as we say, you are up the river without a paddle—you are up the river without a paddle. No one comes to your rescue when you are up the river without a paddle.

Seniors who have worked so hard who are on Medicare will have fiscal problems themselves. It will exacerbate the fiscal problems of Medicare by hastening the exhaustion of the program's trust fund by 4 years. Our commitment is to ensure that the Medicare trust fund clearly is strong, solid, and solvent. Whenever I meet with my seniors, I tell them my commitment—strong, solid, and solvent. But with this document called health care, we are in jeopardy.

So it is clearly a problem, and it certainly is not gathering support in unanimity on the other side. Mr. Speaker, someone is complaining about it. It happens to be Republicans, so it looks like it is going to be a rough road.

But my concluding remark, Mr. Speaker, is that this document that represents itself as a healthcare answer has so many problems, so many people will suffer, so much loss, that I ask my colleagues to reject this legislation as it is presently constructed, and I look forward to working to better health care for all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 2145

TOPICS OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the

gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) until 10 p.m.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I was handed a letter by a lady when I was at one of the many events that I attended in my district. It is how I stay in touch with what is going on. This lady says: "U.S. Congressman LOUIE GOHMERT: I am a 52-year-old widow. ObamaCare is a major financial problem for me. Someone needs to fix the healthcare system. One-third of the money I get from my deceased husband's retirement fund is given to health care. My deductible alone is \$7,000."

She has an exclamation point.

"I am angry with the government deciding how I should spend what little money I have. I had to get a part-time job just to put gas in my car. So I clean tables and I mop floors. I am physically unable to work full time. I am frustrated with the fact I had to move back in with my parents just to make ends meet. Would you like that? Fulfilling. Could or would you do something to relieve this burden?"

That is from a 52-year-old widow in my district. That is what we have done with the burden, ObamaCare. We here in Congress decided: You know what? We are going to tell people like this widow how she has to spend what little money she has left. We are going to force this woman to go clean tables and mop floors when she is physically unable to work full time because we here in Washington have decided we know better than she does. So we have every right in Congress to force people like this dear widow to get on her hands and knees to work for the United States Congress. Pay your taxes and now, that is not enough. We are going to tell you that you are being forced to spend your money on health care that will never help you a dime because you have a \$7,000 deductible.

Or how about hearing, 2 weeks ago, from a friend, one of those who was cut because of financial troubles. They had 100 employees. They can't afford the ObamaCare, so they have cut their 100 to 70, and they are continuing to work to get down to 49. Why? Because of ObamaCare. So we have already had 30 breadwinners, men and women, lose their jobs because of one thing: ObamaCare.

And now there are going to be 21 more who lose their jobs because of one thing: ObamaCare. They have got to get it under 50 so they don't have to keep paying such ridiculous prices for health insurance that has such high deductibles nobody will ever benefit.

Who is benefiting? Well, it can't be all of the health insurance companies because they have dropped out. They can't make money. So it has to be the government that is making all the money from this ObamaCare program.

A single mom told me she had been working at McDonald's making ends meet, but because of ObamaCare, they cut her hours back. Now she has to work at both McDonald's and Burger King, and she was in tears because it is just too much.

And why is she having to do it? Because people right here in this House and the other body, without one Republican vote in this body, told America: Too bad. You are not working enough at McDonald's. We want to make your life miserable. We are going to make you work at two places part time just like this widow that we condemned to start scrubbing tables and floors because the Democrats in this body, without a single Republican vote, decided we know better what you need to do with your time and your money than you do.

So it is a problem of arrogance when Washington thinks it knows so much better than people across the country. And yes, I know, I represent the 26 percent that didn't vote for me. I understand that. And I have heard from them, and I don't need a townhall to know they are for keeping this albatross of a healthcare system. The ACA is not affordable, though. It is ridiculous to call it affordable care.

One of the problems is, when you have to take precious healthcare dollars that used to go to providing care in a hospital, in a clinic, for a patient, now it goes to government navigators. Why? Because there were union officials that decided: We have lost too many union members. The unions that are growing are the government unions, the very ones that Franklin Roosevelt said you should never have a union composed of government workers.

Think about it. You are working for the people of the United States of America. Why would you need a union to organize against the people? Sounds un-American. But those are the ones that are growing. And union leaders, without concern for their members, decided: Let's embrace as many aliens as we can get into the country, legally or otherwise, because they will join the union and that will grow our ranks; and we as union leaders will be better off, but our members' wages will continue to go down, our members will continue to lose jobs. But, gee, we may have more people in our union.

We know that there was supposed to be thousands of new IRS agents hired so that they could help enforce ObamaCare. It is a travesty. The bill that has been filed is not going to do it, but, hopefully, our Republican leadership will be willing to work things out and not prevent good amendments that will make it palatable so enough of us can vote for it.

I have gotten to know President Trump a bit, and I feel like he wants the best deal he can get for America. If this bill were the best he could get, he would probably have to live with that, but we can do a whole lot better. Some of us are determined we are not going to vote for one that doesn't.

In the meantime, there is so much talk by President Obama and all of his minions that are still out there trying to undermine the Trump administration. We have a crisis here in Congress

that people are not talking about. I keep bringing it up. Doesn't seem to be a lot of folks who want to talk about it.

There was a time when we had mainstream media that actually did research, asked questions, dug to the bottom of things. But there are IT—information technology, mainly working with computers—employees, shared employees for several Democrats that are under investigation. Imran Awan was the company owner. Abid Awan, Jamal Awan, Hina Alvi—the wife of Imran Awan—and Natalia Sova, wife of Abid Awan, each made \$160,000 a year as IT-shared employees working on computers for various Democrats in the House of Representatives.

The Awan brothers are of Pakistani descent, but their immigration status is unclear. There are a lot of things that are unknown about the Awan brothers. But they worked for our former DNC chair, DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ—that is Imran Awan. These people are under investigation for stealing material, potentially accessing material they shouldn't have, for taking material off of Capitol Hill and stealing it, using it in other places.

We are told, oh, not to worry, they didn't access classified intelligence information in the SCIF; but other IT people tell me, once someone is in the congressional system, the calendar, email for one Member of Congress, if they are good, it is not that hard to break into lots of other Members of Congress' email and calendars.

What country that hates America—some that like America—wouldn't love to know who people are meeting, especially on the Intelligence Committee like some of the people that have employed these?

Some of them, very fine members of things like the Ethics Committee, Judiciary, Foreign Affairs, Intelligence Committee. Let's see, ANDRÉ CARSON, SANDY LEVIN, JACKIE SPEIER—a lot of people, good people—TIM RYAN. A lot of these folks, they employed these folks. They were very trusting, kind people. And these people didn't have a background check, and now they are under investigation. I heard some have been told that Imran Awan, the lead guy, went back to Pakistan.

Well, if this guy set up and was working on computer systems, is it possible he could have—and this is what a normal mainstream reporter, 30, 40 years ago back in the seventies would have asked: Well, did he set up the DNC computer system that got hacked, that was supposedly hacked by Russians or others, did he set that up so it could be hacked? I mean, there is a lot here going on that we don't know the answers to, and we deserve to know the answers.

There were mortgage transfers, debt evading bankruptcies. Imran Awan, Jamal Awan were known to be the ringleaders of the group, had been providing services since 2005; has convictions for driving offenses which were

serious enough to become criminal misdemeanors, used an illegal radar detector, drove an unregistered vehicle; some say, after masterminding the family's finances, was running the business completely by 2010 and instructed Abid not to even speak to anyone.

The wives of Imran and Abid also began receiving paychecks from the House of Representatives. They purchased two homes in Lorton in 2008, one of which was associated with all three brothers at one time. Alvi sold that home in 2016 to the younger brother Jamal for \$620,000.

Imran owned a home and put it in his father's name in 2008 in Springfield. Abid later claimed, in bankruptcy, that the house was his.

Jamal Awan was placed on the House payroll at age 20, making \$160,000.

Imran is also a real estate agent. Despite making \$160,000 in congressional salaries, debts went unpaid by the Awan brothers, including debts to the Congressional Federal Credit Union.

\$100,000 was taken from a known Hezbollah-connected fugitive, a fugitive from the FBI; and they are associated with this Hezbollah-connected agent, and there is no press out there getting to the bottom of it? What happened to the Washington press, the proud press of Washington of the 1970s? Well, they are in the bag for one party. They are not interested in getting to the bottom of the news. They are all about advocating.

God not just bless America, God help America. We have got to have people wake up before we do much more damage to ourselves. It is time to turn this country around, and one of the things we should start with is getting to the bottom of this investigation; find out how much damage these alleged criminals did from Pakistan to our Congress, and also start undoing the damage ObamaCare has done so people can get jobs again they have lost, so people can have health care that has deductibles they can afford. It is time to make America great again.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CULBERSON (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of illness.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 8, 2017, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

718. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Gastroenterology-Urology Devices; Manual Gastroenterology-Urology Surgical Instruments and Accessories [Docket No.: FDA-2016-N-4661] received March 3, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

719. A letter from the Assistant Administrator, Diversion Control Division, DEA, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's final rule — Schedules of Controlled Substances: Placement of 10 Synthetic Cathinones Into Schedule I [Docket No.: DEA-436] received March 3, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

720. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — 340B Drug Pricing Program Ceiling Price and Manufacturer Civil Monetary Penalties; Delay of Effective Date (RIN: 0906-AA89) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

721. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification that no United Nations agency or United Nations affiliated agency grants any official status, accreditation, or recognition to any organization which promotes and condones or seeks the legalization of pedophilia, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 287e note; Public Law 103-236, Sec. 102(g) (as amended by Public Law 103-415, Sec. 1(o)); (108 Stat. 4301); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

722. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(a); Public Law 92-403, Sec. 1(a) (as amended by Public Law 108-458, Sec. 7121(b)); (118 Stat. 3807); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

723. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting notification that on December 20, 2016, under Sec. 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, for the Government of Kuwait, Transmittal No. 16-40 will be changed to Transmittal No. 16-41, as of the above date, and will be referred to as such in all future documentation, to include publishing in the Federal Register; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

724. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report on the programs or projects of the International Atomic Energy Agency; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

725. A letter from the Acting Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's Freedom of Information Act 2016 Litigation and Compliance Report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(4)(F)(ii)(II); Public Law 89-554, Sec. 5(ii)(II) (as added by Public Law 110-175, Sec. 5); (121 Stat. 2526); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.